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SUBJECT: TFUS01 - CANADA: SURGE OF ASSISTANCE OFFERS IN
WAKE OF KATRINA AND NEW DYNAMIC ON TRADE DISPUTE

REF: STATE 162270

1. (SBU) Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath have captured Canadian headlines and triggered heart-felt offers of assistance (list from paragraph 5). The Mission has received an outpouring of sympathy and offers of assistance from governments at all levels as well as from individual officials and private citizens. We recommend a high-level statement, not just for Canada, to the effect that "In time of great need, in any corner of the globe, America has always been there to help. And now, when the United States is in an hour of great need, it is comforting to know that the world is there to help us. And we appreciate it."

2. (SBU) Per reftel, we have been accepting Canadian offers of assistance in principle. We encourage U.S. agencies to take the Canadians up on their offers and to take advantage of the materials and expertise they can provide.

3. (SBU) Prime Minister Martin's decision to forgo discussing lumber in a long-awaited and heavily publicized call with the President, in favor of a straightforward expression of sympathy, captured the feelings of a nation whose media turned on a dime from complaining about U.S. bullying on trade to criticizing the PM for not moving fast enough to offer assistance. The events of the last weeks have shown again that underlying Canadian ambivalence about U.S. policies is a deep strain of affinity and solidarity, as well as an extensive tradition and network of mutual assistance at the local level. The President of Canada's International Development Agency told the Ambassador this morning that the GOC has had two meetings at the Deputy Minister level to coordinate ways in which Canada can assist us. They stand by to help.

4. (U) Following is a summary of some of the offers received directly by the Mission as well as reports of assistance offered directly to Louisiana.

5. (SBU) Offers from The Government of Canada

Prime Minister: On August 31, the Prime Minister's chief of staff called the Ambassador twice with emphatic offers of unspecified assistance.

Deputy Prime Minister: Deputy Prime Minister Ann McLellan called DHS Secretary Chertoff and offered support; Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (PSEP-C) has contacted HHS and DHS directly to offer supplies from their National Emergency Stockpile System, including blankets, beds, mobile hospitals and mini-clinics.

Late on Thursday, McLellan's Senior Policy Advisor conveyed the fact that McLellan's office has been receiving calls from companies who wish to donate and transport products (such as energizer batteries) to the hurricane-ravaged areas. McLellan's office sends these requests to PSEP-C's Emergency Operations Centre, which is, then in contact with DHS Emergency Operations Center.

Department of National Defence: The Chief of Defense Staff, General Hillier, offered the assistance of the Canadian Forces at a luncheon with the Ambassador. Canadian Forces have been put on standby to help the United States deal with the aftermath of hurricane Katrina. The GOC will be sending a three-ship task force as early as this weekend but probably no later than Tuesday of next week to Louisiana to join up with the US Navy Task Group that is already en route to the Hurricane devastated area. They are preparing two Fast Frigates and their Destroyer to get underway as soon as they receive materials and are manned and ready. (We understand that the HMCS Athabaskan, HMCS Ville de Quebec and probably HMCS Toronto will be the three ships that flow South to join the Truman.) The ships will carry helicopters to be able to conduct operations ashore. Other on-board resources include:

- generators;
- water purification and desalination equipment;
- small boats for use in inland and coastal flooded areas;

- fleet diving unit with RPVs capable of operating in contaminated water to clear obstacles or conduct searches;
- command and control package;
- medical teams; and
- helicopter support.

Canada's Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), which was deployed in the Asian tsunami earlier this year, was put on a one-hour notice in Kingston, Ontario. The 150-person DART has medical, water purification, and reconstruction capabilities.

We also understand that the two Canadian Diving Units (from Halifax, NS and Esquimalt, BC) will probably fly down to Pensacola and link up with the U.S. Navy diving .

16. (U) Offers from provinces and local government

Vancouver, British Columbia deployed a FEMA-certified emergency rescue team Wednesday in response to a request by the governor of Louisiana. The team includes:

- 32 search-and-rescue specialists;
- Two doctors and 12 paramedics;
- Four search dogs;
- Two structural engineers; and
- Eight hazardous materials technicians.

The team is in Kenner, Louisiana, a suburb of New Orleans, attached to the Louisiana State Troopers and is also getting help from the National Guard but has "backed off because of looting and gunfire" and "will not be performing any search and rescue operations for at least the next eight to 12 hours."

Vancouver is also setting up donation centers for hurricane relief.

Manitoba Premier Doer announced that Manitoba has contacted the GOC and offered to be part of any Canadian effort to provide support in the hurricane recovery efforts. As well, Manitoba Hydro (the electric company) offered to send staff to the affected area to help restore power. Over 100 Manitoba Hydro officials and workers are available to travel to the southern U.S. if asked.

Ontario Premier McGuinty has offered to send electricity crews, an emergency medical assistance team, and has extended a blanket offer of whatever assistance is needed. Commissioner of Emergency Management Julian Fantino in the office of the Minister of Community Safety Monte Kwinter is coordinating all efforts from the province of Ontario under strict guidelines to ensure orderly and effective deployment of resources.

Fantino has encourage the public to send cash donations to the Canadian Red Cross, which is interfacing directly with the American Red Cross. Donations are also being collected at all publicly owned businesses, such as the LCBO liquor stores. At the request of the American Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross experts in disaster management and shelter provision services will be deployed within the next few days from Ontario to relieve their American Red Cross counterparts. Fantino said Ontario's FEMA-certified Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Team is ready to deploy if requested.

Toronto Mayor Miller has also offered to the CG to provide any assistance from the city through Fantino's office. We have heard that several officials are working to organize fund-raising events to benefit the Hurricane victims (more information to follow.)

The Mayor of Ottawa called the Ambassador to offer electrical personnel and equipment, paramedics, police, firefighters, and generators.

Quebec Premier Charest has offered an array of assistance, especially hydroelectric workers. HydroQuebec President Thierry Vandal spoke with CG and reiterated that his company stands ready to assist in any way necessary, especially with electricity-related expertise and equipment.

Premier Charest told the Ambassador that Quebec's public security/disaster assistance center has been in contact with its counterparts in New England (with whom the GOQ has a formal mutual assistance agreement) to convey GOQ offer to assist.

Nova Scotia has sent letters to the Governors of four states in the hurricane's path offering assistance. Premier John Hamm told the Ambassador that families in Nova Scotia, particularly with an Acadian connection, would open their doors to people from the affected region that need to leave. Premier Williams of Newfoundland-Labrador has written to the President offering support and assistance.

We expect similar offers of assistance shortly from New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

17. (U) Offers from the private sector

Air Canada's CEO called the Ambassador offering free transport for people and supplies to Houston, Atlanta, and Dallas. They could also make their cargo facilities in those cities available.

The Canadian pharmaceutical association, Rx&D, told us they are contacting the Prime Minister to offer assistance in conjunction with PhRMA, its fellow trade association in the United States.

The Canadian Red Cross has 40 volunteers from Nova Scotia set to leave for hard-hit areas of United States as soon as all the paperwork and medical forms are completed. The President of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce told us his organization has offered the Manitoba Government any support that might be useful to the relief effort. In addition to any direct contributions they can make, many of the members are making monetary donations to the Red Cross.

The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), the industry's main lobby group, said that Canadian oil companies are considering pushing back autumn maintenance at refineries to help alleviate U.S. gasoline shortages caused by Hurricane Katrina. CAPP was in discussions with the governments of Canada, Alberta and the United States on Thursday to determine ways to lessen the energy crisis that has emerged following the hurricane's rampage.

Canfor Corporation, Canada's largest softwood producer, and Tolko Industries Ltd. both said they are assessing what they can contribute to help out in the reconstruction efforts. Both companies said they have received indications from their trade adversaries in the U.S. Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports that donations will cross the border duty-free.

18. (SBU) This cable provides just a snapshot of Canadian offers of assistance. We anticipate that more will be forthcoming in the days and weeks ahead, and there are undoubtedly relief/assistance efforts underway that have not yet come to our attention. The challenge will be to turn these offers of assistance into reality, to integrate them into our own relief efforts and to find appropriate ways to express gratitude to Canada and other countries for their generosity.

WILKINS